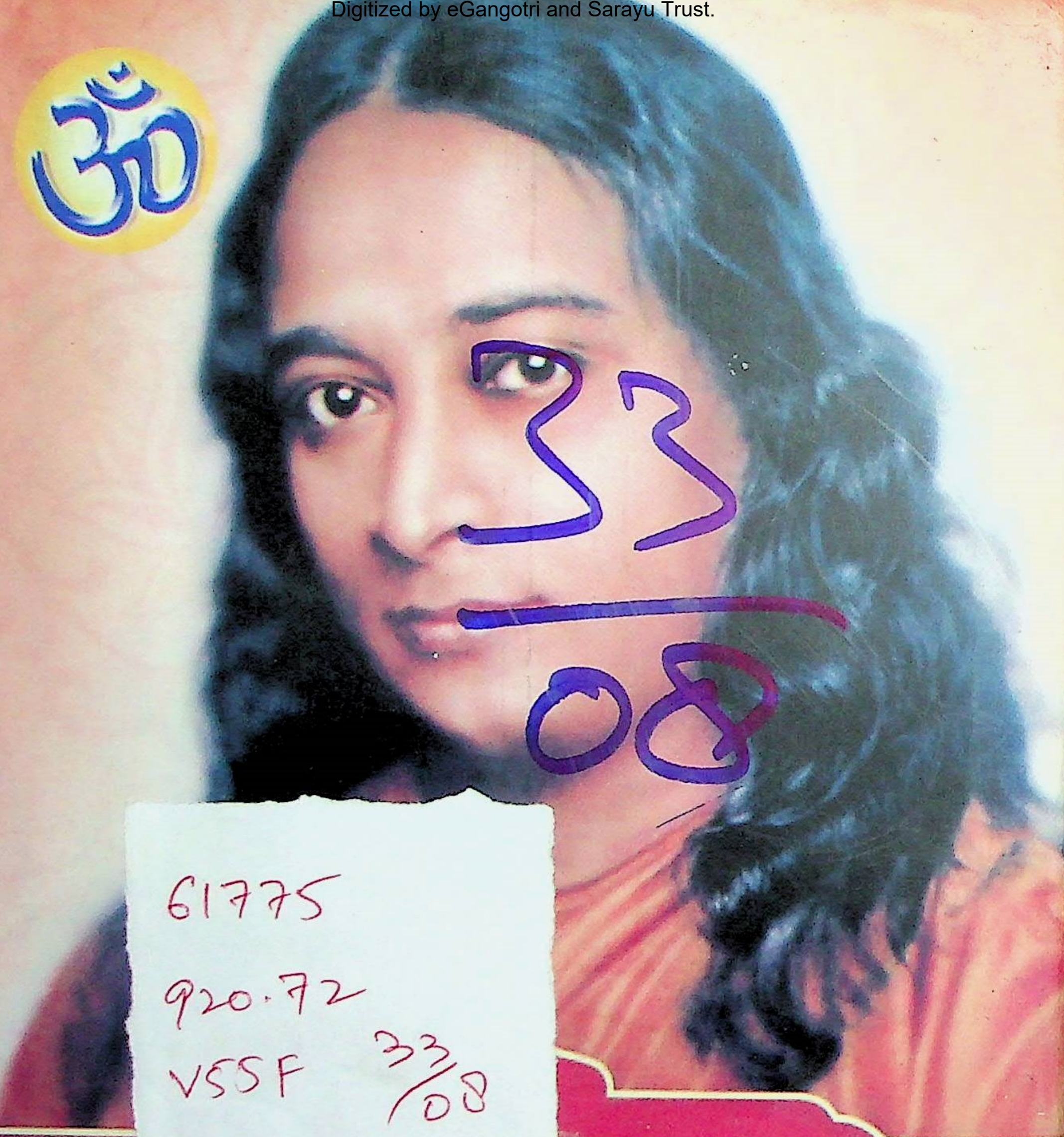

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obiography of a Yogi

Rasamrita

Few Drops of Essence

K.A. Venkatraman

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Author's Preface

It will be rather foolish on my part if I try to praise the 'Autobiography of a Yogi' by my Guru Sri Parma Hansa Yogananda. I am sure, from the day the book was published almost every day one copy of it is purchased by some one or the other in some corner of this world. It would be more correct if I say that this is the best book written for the welfare of humanity during the twentieth century.

I have been reading this book for almost 10 years now and I am still trying to digest its contents. It teaches the essence of the scriptures of all religions. It teaches the secret of creation. It teaches the way by which a person can be in the constant of bliss peace and never ending happiness.

It portrays the life of very many saints who adorned this earth during the later half of 19th century which makes us long to have been born in that period of time and not when we were born.

Guruji has stated many truths in a cryptic way and readers tend to overlook many deep ideas expressed in very simple words. When the curd is churned butter comes out. What I have attempted is to churn the gift of curd given by our guru to take out little butter and distribute to my fellow yogadans.

I do not know how far I have succeeded in my effort. It is for the readers to decide. I dedicate this book at the feet of our guru deva as a small tribute from his very small devotee.

K. A. Venkatraman

MY GURU

Reflections on the 'Autobiography of a Yogi' by PARAMA HANSA YOGANANDA

Normally autobiographies are written by worldly persons. Good amount of ego, self-advertisement and bias can be seen in such narration. Our guruji's comments on such narration can be seen on footnote to page 434 of the Autobiography of a Yogi.

Our Guruji was a Parama Hansa i.e. (one who is completely immersed in divine bliss). So I began to ponder on the necessity for him to write an autobiography. By grace of our Guru himself I was able to realize the answer to my question and I wished to share them with fellow yogadans.

Our Guru has promised to guide us in the Yoga path, even when he is not with us in his mortal form. Our Guru Sri Parama Hansa Yogananda devised a wonderful way to fulfill this promise. Out of his great love for his disciples, he decided to give them a permanent handy guidebook. Which they can carry with them easily to any place for ready reference and guidance. Very cleverly he named it as "The Autobiography of a Yogi" to attract the attention of students desiring to learn the science of yoga.

For the Yogadans, this book is the GURU GEETA-a sacred text for daily PARAYAN (revision) and CHINTAN (reflection). In the book our Guruji has very thoughtfully incorporated all his teachings on life, behavior, social relations, devotion to work, importance of prayer discipline required to become a yoga student and mainly other important topics which have made it a prescribed text book in many universities.

Every chapter of this book has been designed with a definite purpose in explaining the truths enshrined in Sri Bhagvat Geeta that, Life's YAGNAS (offerings to God) can be performed in different ways and salvation can be attained by man even by loving and caring for the God created life forms. Our Guru has put a lot of wisdom in a very cryptic way. It is not possible to realize the depth of Guruji's teachings. My reflections are the outcome of repeated readings.

In the very first sentence Guruji says

"The characteristic feature of Indian culture have long been a search for ultimate verities and the concomitant disciple-Guru relationship."

The ultimate verities is the truth called GOD and the disciple is able to reach God through his absolute trust and devotion to his own enlightened Guru. Our Guru thus summarizes his whole teaching in one sentence like the great sage Pathanjali who said *"Yogaha chitta vrutti nirodaha."* Then he composed other sutras as explanation to the words **CHITTA, VRUTTI** and **NIRODHA.**

Describing his Guru Swami Sri Yukteshwar Sri Yoganandji says, *"He was one of the great masters who are India's truest wealth. Emerging in every generation they have bulwarked their land against the fate of ancient Egypt and Babylonia."* In every generation in India great masters are born and these great souls guard and explain our cultural heritage, moral values and their importance, to younger generation. This self-sacrificing work has prevented our ancient going the same way as of Egypt, Babylon and other great civilizations of the past.

Guruji says "*I find my earliest memories covering the anachronistic features of a previous incarnation. Clear recollections came to me of a distant life in which I had been a Yogi in the Himalayan snows*"

"By this Guruji reminds us that death is the end of the physical body alone and the soul assumes many bodies along with passage of time. Thus he reinforces the truth of Karma and Rebirth".

Next he tells us about his parents and their happy relationship which makes the foundation of a happy home. The incident which led to his parents becoming the disciples of Sri Lahiri Mahashaya of Benares. How the great guru blessed his mother resulting in his own birth.

Guruji shows us a picture of a strict but kind and disciplined father, a very generous and kind hearted mother, loving sisters and his childhood pranks Guruji says ***"MOTHER INSTRUCTED ME-NEVER TO USE THE POWER OF WORD FOR DOING HARM"***. If a yogada student can remember and practice this one advice his life will undergo a tremendous transformation.

In the second chapter we see the passing away of Guruji's mother and how powerfully the incident affected him and the setup of his entire family. He tells us how his father very stoically bore the loss of his devoted wife and took upon himself the additional burden of being a mother to his children despite his busy schedule of life.

Indirectly Guruji is advising us not to crib when misfortune befalls us and additional responsibilities have to be shouldered due to the inevitable laws of KARMA. In this chapter we also learn how the sages knew the future of our guru and they advised his mother about her future also.

In the third chapter we go to meet Swami Pranavananda who exhibits his yogic power to assume two bodies and explain the need of a satguru to attain self-realization. Sri Pranavananda also tells Guruji that his future path lies in yoga.

In the fourth chapter we see Guruji's interrupted flight towards Himalayas. Here in we see his great sense of humour at several places. It also shows us his deep understanding of human nature. About the experience of the policeman with the Himalayan yogi he says "*the officer concluded with a pious ejaculation: His experience had obviously moved him beyond his usual depths*". What Guruji tells us is we tend to become hard, sceptical and shallow while leading a normal wordly life.

Guruji once again reiterates his earlier statement by observing "*India materially poor for the last two centuries, yet has an inexhaustible fund of divine wealth; spiritual sky-scrapers may be occasionally encountered by the wayside; even by worldly men like this policeman*".
Though these words were written in the years 1945 before independence, they are eternally true. The only difference today is that India has advanced much in the scientific and technological fields in the half century after independence. Economically also the nation has become buoyant.
In this chapter Guruji once again recieves assurance from a

Sadhu at Banaras, that his future path is that of a renunciant.

In the later part of this chapter we are introduced to Swami Kebalananda, another great disciple of Sri Lahiri Mahashaya. Through him we are able to see the picture of Lahiri Mahashaya at his home in Banaras (Varanasi) with his disciples sitting at his feet gaining spiritual knowledge. A very wonderful picture of the great guru rises vividly before our eyes with his great disciples in a meditative mood.

Swami Kebalananda says *"The Guru was always present in a small front parlor on the first floor. As he sat in lotus posture on a back less wooden seat, his disciples garlanded him in semicircle. His eyes sparkled and danced with the joy of divine. They were half closed, peering through the inner telescope into a sphere of eternal bliss. He seldom spoke at length, occasionally his gaze would focus on a student in need of help; healing words poured then like an avalanche of light, an indescribable peace blossomed within me at the master's glance. I was permeated with his fragrance, as though from a lotus of infinity.*

To be with him even without exchanging a word for days was an experience that changed my entire being. If any invisible barrier arose in my path of concentration, I would meditate at my Guru's feet. There the most tenuous states came easily within my grasp.

Such perceptions eluded me in the presence of lesser teachers. The master was a living temple of God, whose secret doors were open to all disciples through devotion Lahiri Mahashaya, was no bookish interpreter of scriptures. Effortlessly he dipped into the divine library. Foam of words *and spray of thoughts gushed from the fountain of his Omniscience. He had the wondrous clavis that unlocked the profound philosophical science mentioned in the Vedas. If asked to explain the different planes of consciousness mentioned in the ancient texts he would smilingly assent.*

I will undergo those states and presently tell you what I perceive he was thus diametrically unlike the teachers who commit scriptures to memory and then give forth unrealized abstractions.

Please expound the holy stanzas the meaning occurs to you- the tacitum guru often gave instructions to a nearby disciple. I will guide your thoughts that the right interpretation be uttered.

In this way many of Lahiri Mahashayas perceptions came to be recorded with voluminous commentaries by various students."

The master never counseled slavish belief "words are only shells" he said–"*win conviction of God's presence through your own joyous contact in meditation*". No matter what the disciples problem would be - the Guru advised kriya yoga for its solution. "*The Yogic key will not loose its efficiency when I am no longer present in the body to guide you. This technique cannot be bound, filed and forgotten in the manner of theoretical inspirations. Continue ceaselessly on your path to liberation through Kriya, whose power lies in practice"*

Our Guruji teaches us through the words of Sri Kebalananda the value and depth of scriptural truths, the need for guru's assistance in understanding those truths. Need for conviction in God's grace

and finally emphasis on practicing Kriya regularly to get rid of life's all problems.
In the footnote of this chapter the ego principle has been explained. Man is separated from his creator due to his own ego known as the Ahamkara (in short I and mine).

There is neither I nor anything is mine because we come empty handed and leave empty handed from this world.

This illusion of self and feeling of ownership of things is the great delusion called Maya, which prevents the individual soul from realizing its oneness with God.
In the fifth chapter onwards Guruji pulls us onto deeper philosophy. As a preamble he says that the two years interval from his flight to Himalayas to the time he met his guru Swami Sri Yukteshwar Giri were spent in meeting several other saints and sages who moulded his ideas and strengthened his resolution to make quest of God as the prime Goal of his life.

This chapter begins with the remarks of the saint at Kalighat temple in Calcutta.

"God is simple, every thing else is complex. Do not seek absolute values in the relative world of nature".

This is profound philosophy because, God is simple if we think God as omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient all pervading power, manifesting itself as the tiniest atom and also as the infinite number of universe incomprehensible to the tiny human mind and invisible to these limited senses.
Instead if we choose to think ourselves as extremely wise and capable of finding the secrets of creation, then a whole lot of complications and questions arise, many of which remain

unanswered.

We may start our quest with; whether the visible universe came into existence by chance or there is a creator behind the whole universe as is normally believed by most of us.

With the advancement of science most amazing discoveries have been made and are continuing to be made. Yet a final answer to all questions is as far away from scientists as is God from average man.

Even the great scientists like Dr Albert Einstein have said that the universe works in a perfectly planned and organized manner, and this could not be an accidental happening. Scientists who have done research into the structure and behavior pattern of sub-atomic particles could not conclusively establish the location of these particles if they were determining the velocity and have accepted that. At this point Physics appears to merge into metaphysics. World is relative i.e. relative in time frame. Our perception of the world relation with people around us also keeps changing with the passing time.

Five hundred years back the World was an unknown vast place, a hundred years back the World was a fully known place with vast distances, today we call it a global village. Days are not far off when we begin to call it a global shop. Thus we see that the ideas keep changing drastically and it is absurd to seek permanent values in this changing world. It will be akin to chasing a mirage in a desert.

The Sadhu further said, "*Good and evil is the challenging riddle that life places–"Sphinx" like before every intelligence. Attempting no solution, most men forfeit their lives, penalty* *now even as in the days of Thebes. Here and there a towering lonely figure never cries defeat and from the Maya of duality he plucks the cleaveless truth of Unity.*

The intelligence to analyze and differentiate between good and evil is found only in a handful of people. The rest of them pass through life doing only that which would give them worldly comforts, wealth and power. These people ultimately pay the penalty of suffering, disease, loss of near and dear ones, loss of wealth, various other problems disappointments and old age full of worries.

Life places the riddle of good and evil before every individual. Man reacts to the challenges of life, in his own way according to his own will and inclinations. Time and space are the Judges, which reward or punish for the Karmic performances of the individuals. Occasionally here and there one individual decides to forego his personal needs and comforts and opts to suffer for the good of humanity. Such persons are able to break the barrier of Maya (the delusion of duality) to find God as the single cause of the whole drama.

The Sadhu says further *"Self-scrutiny - relentless observance of ones own thoughts, is a stark and shattering experience. It pulverizes the stoutest ego. But true self-analysis mathematically operates to produce seers. The way of self-expression, individual acknowledgements, results in egoists, sure of their right to their private interpretations of God and the Universe.*

Introspection and examination of our own thoughts, actions and desires impartially, keeping God as the Judge will find us on the wrong side more often than not and it is difficult to digest the verdict "I am wrong or I was wrong" every time. But without such introspections the ego cannot be killed. Only a few persistent diehard followers of God who ultimately succeed and are able to penetrate through the veil of Maya and perceive the single cause known as God.

Here "Self-expression" refers to those group of people who live with the idea that every thing can be subjected to scientific analysis in a chemical or physical laboratory and those which cannot be so analyzed are not true and those like God can be accepted only as concepts developed by man to find an answer to the phenomenon remaining unexplained so far by the investigators of physical world.

These groups of people generally include Scientists, Psychologists, many doctors, Educationists, Politicians, Administrators, Journalists and all atheists. These people make their own commentaries on God and the universe and assert that their interpretations are correct before such arrogant claims God humbly retires and prefers to remain hidden.

The Sadhu says further– "*Man can understand no eternal verity until he has freed himself from pretensions. The human mind, bared to the centuried slime, is teeming with the repulsive life of countless world–delusions. Struggle of the battlefield pale into insignificance here, when man first contends with the inner enemies! No mortal foes these, to be overcome by harrowing array of might! Omnipresent unresting pursuing man even in Sleep, subtly equipped with miasmic weapons, these soldiers of ignorant lusts seek to slay us all". Thoughtless is the man who buries his ideals, surrendering to common fate. May he seem other than impotent, wooden and ignominious?*"

Understanding God or understanding the secrets of his wondrous creations is not possible till a person gives up his pretensions to wisdom. Form "I know" he has to learn to say humbly "I do not know enough." The hidden "Smruti" (memories of past incarnations) cover his soul like the slime of centuries, and the cumulative delusions of this past incarnations clouds the brain in the present birth also. The Entrenched Gunas (qualities) like Kama (lust), Krodha (anger), Lobha (Covetousness), Moha (Infatuation/ Desire), Mada (Pride) and Matsarya (Jealousy) do not allow an individual to be at peace and keep him troubled at all times.

These are not ordinary enemies whom we fight against in a battlefield and who can be overcome by physical strength. These are very elusive elements which hide inside us and delude us and ultimately destroy us. Most people either do not have the courage to fight these or give up the fight half way to end in the arms of death, hence the sage calls them as impotent, wooden, ignominious.

Guruji asks the sage– "*Respected sir, have you no sympathy for the bewildered masses?*"

Guruji being the premavatar feels deeply for his fellow human beings and asks the sage to give a solution for their redemption. He feels that they deserve sympathy and not condemnation.

The sage explained, *loving God who is the repository of all virtues and loving fellow humans (who have little or no virtue) in the same way may appear to be a paradox at first. However, there is a solution to this paradox. If we do introspection of our own character and compare it with that of our fellowmen we will find a common factor and that is "We are all selfish to the core. In that sense at least the brother hood of man is* *established.*" When we discover this we ought to be ashamed of ourselves and that feeling will make us humble and sympathetic towards fellow humans. This compassion turns into service to others to help them out of their plight and service to humanity becomes service to God.

As a parting advise the sage tells our Guruji that the ancient sages of our land have carefully laid down the pattern of life to be followed by every individual i.e. half span of study and house holder duties and the other half for divine contemplation and meditation. Unless a person decides early in life to dedicate himself for the quest of God renounces the world. This is the pattern followed over the milleniums and is valid even today. Despite all the changes, which have been brought in by materialism, this truth is still valid and that is our precious heritage and we should honour it.

Guruji then takes us to meet Gandh Baba or the perfumed saint. The object of this tour is to teach us not to use Yogic power for self-advertisements and such activities do not take a person nearer to God. He tells us this through the words of Persian saint Abu Said who tells the Muslim fakirs– *"The birds easily fly in the air, all aquatic animals are at home in water, the Devil is present equally in the East and the West! A true and good human being is the one who while pursuing his occupation to earn his livelyhood is never for a single moment forgetful of God."*

In the next chapter Guruji takes us to meet the Tiger Swami. This chapter has been designed to emphasize the power of mind over the physical body. A yogada student is taught to perform the energization exercises to energize the body muscles before sitting for meditation. By vitalizing the muscles and by energization even a ferocious tiger can be controlled with bare hands. This has been neatly explained in the following words of Tiger Swami- "*Mind is the wielder of muscles. The force of a hammer blow depends upon the energy applied. The power expressed by man's bodily instrument depends on his aggressive will. The body is literally manufactured and sustained by the mind. Through pressure of instincts from past lives, strengths or weaknesses percolate gradually into human consciousness. They express as habits, which is turn manifest as desirable or undesirable. Outward frailty has mental origin, in a vicious circle the habit bound body thwarts the mind. If a master allows himself to be commanded by a servant, the latter becomes autocratic. The mind similarly enslaves; submitting to the bodily dictation.*"

In chapter seven we meet the levitating saint Bhaduri Mahashaya. Primarily we are enlightened about the effects of Pranayama (control of life force) in this chapter. Sri Bhaduri explains the reason for his seclusion thus– "*my rule for seclusion is not for my own comfort but for others. Worldly people do not like the candor that shatters their delusion.* "Guruji says saints are not only rare but are often disconcerting in their speech."

Worldly people are full of ego and they feel shattered when saints point out their defects to them rather rudely. Especially when the Gurus often make it a point to hammer out the ego of their disciples by sharp criticism. As Guruji has said- "*Swami Yukteshwar never let go an oportunity to hammer out any inadequacies in me.*"

Our Daya mata has said how our Guruji did not excuse the inadequacies in her approach to God. Even in scriptures we meet men who did not like and heed the frank and wise advice of the sages e.g. Trishanku the king of Ayodhya spurned the advice of his guru Vasishta and suffered the consequences. Similarly king

Kaushika who later became the sage Vishwamitra initially spurned the wise counsel of sage Vasishta.

Guruji says- "*The contemporaries of a sage are not only those of narrow present.*" Sages are called Trikalagnas (one who can see the past, present and the future). It is because of this power Swami Vivekananda could tell Yogacharya Dickinson about his future guru who would present him with a silver cup.

Guruji said- "*God plants his saints sometimes in unexpected soils lest we think we can reduce him to a rule.*"

Human ego tends to reduce every thing to a fixed rule, so that he can proudly say; yes I know that already. It is to avoid such presumptions God ordains his saints to be born in any part of the world, in any religion whenever he feels the need to rejuvenate Dharma (righteousness) at a particular phase of time.

After an hour of meditation Bhaduri Mahashaya asks Guruji "*You often go into silence but have you developed anubhava? Do not mistake the technique for God*". Guruji observes "*he was reminding me to love God more than meditations*". What Guruji wishes to impart to us is do not be satisfied with the feeling that I am meditating regularly as such I am complying with the instructions of my guru properly. It has been explained in yogada lessons, meditation is only a technique of concentration on God. The ultimate goal is to get immersed in divine bliss at all times of day and night. The divine bliss is the anubhava.

In the next chapter we go with our guru to meet India's great scientific son Sir Jagdish Chandra Bose. This scientific sage of India demonstrated to the entire world, the Vedic truth that life force exists in all things i.e. Chara (moving) and Achara (immovable things). He also demonstrated the reaction of all things to stimuli and even death of inanimate things. He also demonstrated that both for scientific research and the divine research whole lot of dedication and concentration are required to get new and positive results.

In the foot note of this chapter the truths expounded by Vaisesika are quoted to illustrate that our ancient sages knew the truths discovered by modern scientists and they had designed for us a system of life which will be in consonance with the cosmic rhythm. The quotation from Vedas "yat pinde tat Brahmande" meaning what ever is inside the atom, same is the consituent of the visible universe amply demonstrates the wisdom of the ancients because Physical science is still struggling to confirm this truth.

After this we accompany our guru deva to the house of Shri Mahendra Nath Gupta fondly known as master Mahashaya. He was the great sage who compiled the talks of Ramakrishna Parama Hansa into an absorbing divine book named as the 'Gospel of Shri Rama Krishna.'

As Guruji says at that time master Mahashaya had attained an advanced stage of divine communion and was in constant presence of the divine mother. He gives Guruji the cosmic experience at the same time telling him that he will be the disciple of another great guru.

Guruji concludes this chapter with the saying- "*saints of all religion have attained God realization through the simple concepts of cosmic beloved (God is simple). Because the absolute is Nirguna (absolutely pure) and Achintya (beyond the human*

who totally surrender unto him find him coming to their aid at all times of crisis in their life. A devotee, who begins to recognize the helping hand of God, begins to depend more and more on God, inspite of all the worldly logic against such dependence. Guruji tells us how God rescued him from his dilemma by two seemingly accidental happenings, which helped him to clear the school final exams.

After this we see Guruji joining the Bharat Maha Mandal ashram at Banaras and playfully he explains the pangs of hunger suffered by him as a new initiate to the ashram discipline. He tells us of his questions to Swami Dayanandji that if he never asked for food and nobody offers him any, should he starve to death?

"Die then! This alarming counsel split the air. Die if you must, Mukunda! Never believe that you live by the power of food and not by the power of God! He who has created every form of nourishment, he who has bestowed appetite, will inevitably see that his devotee is maintained. Do not imagine that rice sustains you nor that money or men support you. Could they aid if the Lord withdraws your life breath? They are his instrument merely. Is it by any skill of yours that food digests in your stomach? Use the sword of your discrimination, Mukunda! cut through the chains of agency and perceive the single cause."

This is one of the very important lessons which Guruji wants us to learn that we are normally under delusion of food. It is not ordinarily possible to overlook the fact that I am hungry. So we are always afraid of hunger and starvation, because it may lead to death in turn. Infact it is the fear of death which makes man clamour for food, and in turn makes him accumulate more and more of worldly possessions as an insurance against bad times.

We develop a false confidence that so long there is money in the purse we wont be starving. Another aspect is that we tend to develop likes and dislikes for various types of food and beverages. We often hear people say "I cannot do without a cup of coffee/ tea early in the morning." We seldom dare to think otherwise!

Guruji tells us that our faith in God's bounty is always in doubt and this keen desire to preserve the body and cater to its whims and fancies, outwits the soul. Till we develop a strong mind which will accept the power of the all sufficiency of the soul and overcome all temptations of tongue we will continue to flounder in delusion. Voluntary fasting for atleast one or two days in a month prescribed by the ancients is with the double purpose of giving rest to the digestive organs and to attain control over the temptations of the tongue.

At this point of time Guruji's Amulet vanishes, and his troubles start with the other disciples of the ashram over his tendencies to go into meditation for long periods. The divine mother with the assurance "the master cometh today" answers his anguished prayer. Then we see the very sweet and poignant meeting of the guru and his disciple after a long seperation. The guru's eagerness to get back his beloved disciple and the disciple's eagerness to meet the long lost master has been portrayed so beautifully that we long to be with our own guru in the same way, and make us proud of our own discipleship to these incomparable gurus of ours!

We are also made aware of the intimate guru disciple relationships. Swami Sri Yukteshwar says- *"I give my unconditional love"* and asks-*"will you give me the same unconditional love?"* and our guruji replies- *"I will love you eternally guru deva"* and then explains to us–*"Ordinarily love is selfish, darkly rooted in desires and satisfaction. Divine love is without* *condition , without boundary, without change.The flux of human heart is gone for ever with the transfixing touch of pure love."* Guruji expects us to give him this unconditional love.

In the next chapter, our guru once again demonstrates for his brother the abundance of God's grace on his devotees. The incident of two penniless boys in Brindavan is really an eye opener for us. All people who have faith in God do experience the grace of God some time or the other, but we do not care to remember or often fail to acknowledge God's grace. This is why guruji exclaims, *"How short is human memory for divine favours"* in the evening initiates Pratap Chatterji and tells him:- *"Pratap, kriya is your chintamani. The technique, as you see is simple embodies the art of quickening man's spiritual evolution. Hindu scriptures teach that the incarnating ego requires a million years to obtain liberation from Maya. This natural period is greatly shortened through kriya yoga, just as plant growth can be accelerated far beyond its normal rate, as J. C. Bose had demonstrated, so also mans psychological development can be speeded up by scientific means. Be faithful in your practice you will approach the guru of all gurus."*

This is the direct advice we receive from our guruji on the efficacy of Kriya Yoga and instruction to be faithful in practice so that we may be able to reach the Divine quickly.

Chapter 12: my year in master hermitage.

This is the longest chapter in the whole book. In this chapter our Gurudeva has been very particular about the details of his training under swami Sri Yukteshwarji. For a student of kriya yoga this chapter is a very important lesson containing many intricate points. Apart from this, the full stature and greatness of Swami Yukteshwarji has been clearly brought out for the benefit of

Yogada disciples.
First we see our gurudeva reporting at Srirampur ashram, his entreaty and persistence with his guru to make him concede to show God. Swami Yukteshwar concedes and Guruji tells us. *"A master's word is not easily given. The implications in the pledge opens out vast Metaphysical vistas."* We should be happy to remember that our master has promised to guide us even when he is not in the present physical body, and his word cannot be falsified.

Now we get out first lesson from Sri Yukteshwarji

(1) Look fear in the face it will cease to trouble you.

(2) Attachment is binding, it lends an imaginary halo to the object of desire.

(3) Good and positive suggestions should instruct the sensitive ears of children. There early ideas long remain sharply etched.

Guruji says– *"The impartiality of saints is rooted in wisdom. They are no longer influenced by alternating faces of maya. No longer subject to the likes and dislikes that confuse the judgement of unenlightened men. Sri Yukteshwar showed no special consideration to those who were powerful, rich or accomplished: neither did he slight others for their poverty or illiteracy. He would listen respectfully to the words of truth from a child; and on occasion would openly ignore a conceited pundit."*

We as normal human beings get carried away by emotions and try to be judges on other's actions. We appreciate those actions which we like and criticize those which we do not like. These likes and dislikes of ours are formed from our early childhood and those which we inherit from our previous incarnations. Floundering in the sea of the emotions is called Maya. To come out of it, the only way is to go deep into Kriya and develop unflinching faith in God so that we can accept things without likes and dislikes. A Sanskrit Shloka says-*"Yukti yukta upadheyam Vachanam balakadapi anyam trunamiva tyajyam yuktam panchama janmana."* It means (Any statement that is wise and useful should be accepted even it emanates from a child or from a low born person and others should be rejected even if it comes from an authoritative person).

Our Guruji observes–*"A self-realized master has already left behind the stepping stone of Meditation." "The flower falls when the fruit appears but the saints often cling to spiritual forms in order to set an example for the disciples."*

By this he means that the saints who are always in God's consciousness are constantly experiencing the divine bliss, so they have attained their object of meditation. Yet they continue to meditate to show the disciples the kind of concentration required to attain God.

By narrating the incident of the mosquito net guruji teaches us two important lessons. Frist to lose insect consciousness and secondly to practice ahinsa (nonviolence).

Sri Yukteshwar says-*"Medicines have their limitations; the divine creative life force has none. Believe that and you shall be well and strong."*

Ordinary people have more faith in doctors and medicines. A large number do not know of the existence of divine creative life force.

Even those who know of it are toc lazy to put in the necessary effort to awaken that force.
So Sri Lahiri Mahashaya observed to Swami Yukteshwar– "*You have seen how your health followed your sub-conscious expectations. Thought is a force as Electricity or Gravitation. The human mind is the spark of the almighty consciousness of God. I could show you that whatever your powerful mind believes very intently would instantly come to pass.*"

Then Sri Yukteshwar explains- "*All creation is governed by law. The principles that operate the outer universe, discoverable by scientists, are called Natural laws, but there are subtler laws that rule the hidden spiritual planes and the inner realm of consciousness. These principles are knowable through the science of yoga. It is not the physicist but the self-realized Master who comprehends the nature of matter.*"

The relation between science and yoga could not have been explained in more clearer terms than this. The so called sciences are not the ultimate truth nor can they ever fathom the mysteries of creation. On the other hand a self-realized yogi can understand the secret of creation as such he attains the ability of changing the structure and nature of things in the illusionary world. Sri Lahiri Mahashaya had attained the power to create change or dematerialize the atoms, as he was one with the creator.

Scientists can discover only those principles, which operate the outer universe. Such discoveries are called as the natural laws. But those hidden laws undiscoverable by physical senses can be known through yogic meditation so it is concluded that it is not the physicist but self-realized yogi who can understand the true nature of creation.

Then Guruji tells how Swami Sri Yukteshwar was able to read his innermost subconscious thoughts and would not allow him to be even slightly inattentive to his lessons and when our guru protested he says *"you have given me that right. The subtle truths I am expounding cannot be grasped without your complete concentration unless necessary I do not invade the seclusion of other's minds. Man has the natural privilege of roaming secretly among his thoughts. The unbidden Lord does not enter there; neither do I venture intrusion."*

Here we see the extraordinary power of a self-realized guru who penetrates the inner mind of his disciple but refrains from doing so with other persons in order to abide by God's will that each person may have his own secrets unless he wishes to divulge them voluntarily. Guruji tells us that Sri Yukteshwarji was omniscient and omnipotent but he seldom said anything about his powers but operated them at will. Sri Yukteshwarji explains his position thus, *"A man of realization does not perform any miracle until he receives an inward sanction. God does not wish the secrets of his creation revealed promiscuously. Also every individual in the world has an inalienable right to his free will. A saint will not encroach on that independence."*

Any doubt that may hang in the mind of yogada disciples about their worthiness to engage in yoga practice is quelled by Sri Yukteshwar in these words *"Forget the past. The vanished lives of all men are dark with many shames. Human conduct is ever unreliable until man is anchored in the Divine. Every thing in future will improve if you are making a spiritual effort now."* Regarding bodily ailments Sri Yukteshwar advised his students to depend more in mental therapy and less on doctors. He told chelas *"the body is a treacherous friend. Give it its due, no more pain and pleasure are transitory; endure all* *dualities with calmness, trying at the same time to remove your self beyond their power. Imagination is the door through which disease as well as healing enters. Disbelieve in the reality of sickness even when you're ill, an unrecognized visitor will flee."*

By saying treacherous friend we are advised not to rely too much on the health of the physical body, which is susceptible to viral and other forms of attacks and liable to fall any moment. Care should be taken to guard against sickness but once sickness enters one should be able to bear it without grouse and with indifference to pain and that will cure it more quickly than medicines.

Some of the quotes of Sri Yukteshwar are beyond comparison such as–*"good manners without sincerity are like a beautiful dead lady. Straightforwardness without civility is like a surgeon's knife, effective but unpleasant. Candor with courtesy is helpful and admirable."*

In the modern so called civilized societies polite talk, lip sympathy, offering help without meaning it are considered as virtues and good manners. These represent the beautiful dead lady who is of no use. Sincerity of purpose is important but politeness and eagerness to assist and genuine sympathy are more important.

Guruji says, *"From a transient teacher of my early life I had imbibed a few erroneous lessons. A chela, I had been told need not concern himself strenously with wordly duties: when I had neglected or carelessly performed my tasks I had not been chastised. Human nature finds such instructions very easy for assimilation. Under master's unsparing rod however,*

I soon recovered from the agreeable delusions of irresponsibility".
What guruji tells us is avoiding any routine responsibility under the pretext of doing more important work is not an acceptable excuse. Human nature is such that it always searches an excuse of not doing the work. Guruji further tells us how sarcastic Sri Yukteshwar could be when we hear his remarks *"Those who are too good for this world are adorning some other, you are under obligation to render grateful service. Only he who has fully mastered the breathless state is freed from cosmic imperatives. I shall not fail to let you know when you have attained the final perfection."*

In fact guruji is counseling us to get rid of our ego and to do that, take every blow to our ego gracefully and correct our own mistakes pointed out by other's unless the ego is completely destroyed God cannot enter the temple of our heart.

About the saintliness of Swami Yukteshwarji our guru says, *"If a saint were clear to you then, you would be one. Among the trillion mysteries, breathing every second the inexplicable air, may one venture to ask that the fathomless nature of master be instantly grasped?"*

We have to think on the same line about our guru also. We can never understand the full extent of his greatness, until we attain self-realization according to his teachings.

Guruji says!- *"I demolished every wall of rationalization and sub-conscious reservation behind which human personality generally shields itself."*

We have to give up rationalizing and justifying every action of ours by means of various excuses to satisfy our own conscious which keeps pestering us whenever we are on the wrong side of God ordained laws. Its only when we can accept our own defects or mistakes and make effort to rectify them, we will be able to come under the grace of guru and then God.

After this the episode of Kumar is narrated to explain that all duties in gurus ashram are equally important and valuable, we should not evaluate on different scales the different duties performed by different sevakas.

With the episode of Kumar there comes a most valuable advice from Guruji and that is– "*Enjoyments of Wine and Sex are rooted in the natural man; to appreciate them one requires no delicacy of perception. Sense wiles are comparable to evergreen oleander, fragrant with its rosy colored flower: every part of the plant is poisonous.*" Wine and Sex are both intoxicants giving short duration satisfaction. A person does not require any special talent or practice to indulge in these pleasures. But these are like the poisonous oleander plant and lead man to his destruction. The real intoxicant lies within, but man never gives up his quest in the outer world. This portion of the book is very valuable containing precious wisdom for those who seek it.

Sri Yukteshwar says- "*Keen intelligence is two edged, it may be used constructively or destructively, like a knife to cut the oil of ignorance, or to decapitate oneself. Intelligence is rightly guided only after mind has acknowledged the inescapability of spiritual law. How can sense slaves enjoy the world? Its subtle flavours escape them while they grovel in primal mud. All nice discriminations are lost to a man of elemental lusts. Just as hunger not greed has legitimate purpose, so the sexual instincts implanted by nature is solely for the propagation of* *species, not for the kindling of insatiable longings. Destroy wrong desires now; otherwise they will remain with you after the astral body has separated from its physical casing.*

Even when the flesh is weak the mind should be constantly resistant. If temptation assails you with crude force, overcome it by impartial analysis and indomitable will, every natural passion can be mastered.

Conserve your powers. Be like the capacious ocean, quietly absorbing all the tributary rivers of senses. Daily renewed sense yearning as your inner peace; they are like openings in a reservoir allowing vital waters to be wasted in the desert soil of materialism. The forceful activating impulse of wrong desire is the greatest enemy to happiness of man. Roam in the world as a Lion of self-control; don't let the frogs of sense-weakness kick you around.

A true devotee is finally freed from all instinctive compulsions. He transforms his need for human affection into aspiration of God alone–a love solitary because omnipresent."

The force in the words of this passage is sufficient to make any normal individual to follow the path of God to attain salvation for the students of Yoga Marga daily reading of this one passage would be sufficient to take them ahead.

For astheists Sri Yukteshwarji has another advise- "*examine your thoughts unremittingly for twenty four hours. Then wonder no longer of God's absence.*" From the bookish scholars he calls for their original commentaries of their own experiences and what part of scriptural advice they have begun to practice and how the truths have transformed their lives?

Scriptures describe the consequences of different Karmas or results of differant actions of man. So learning scriptures by heart and quoting them in appropriate context is not an achievement worthy of praise. Putting the advise of scriptures to practice and gaining experience by one's own self and to be able to assert that they are true by personal verification constitutes true knowledge.

In this context a story is told of a king and a scholar who had read Srimad Bhagavatam (an old Hindu scripture tracing the lineage of kings who ruled the earth from the beginning of epoch, and their life's achievements). The scholar who was poor wanted to earn the appreciation of the king and approached him with the offering of reading and reciting Bhagavatam. On his first approach the king said, "Dear sir I am not convinced that you have mastered the epic of Bhagavatam, so please read it again and come to me."

The scholar was puzzled but went on to comply with the king's request. But the second and third time the king turned down the scholar with the same advice. So the scholar went home and began to think on what he was reading. Slowly the scriptural truths started penetrating his brain and he forgot the king and became immersed in the divine thought. After some time the king inquired about the scholar and he was informed that the scholar has become a Bhagavata (one who is immersed indivine bliss).

On hearing this king said let us all proceed to the house of that saint to hear Bhagavatam from him.

Another story is that of king Janaka and Suka Deva Goswami recited by our Guruji in the yogada lessons.

Scholars and regligious heads who try to up hold their own belief either as exclusive religion or sectarian differences such as Saivism, Vaishnavism. Advaita Vedanta or Dwaita Sampradaya etc or other paths such as Buddhism, Jainism, Confushianism or Sikhism to attain salvation; confuse humanity more than in convincing people of the single unity that is God which is simple and easy. Sri Yukteshwarji summarizes these people thus–"These bloodless pedants smell unduly of the lamp. They consider philosophy to be gently intellectual setting-up exercise. Their elevated thoughts are carefully unrelated either to the crudity of outward action, or to any scourging inner discipline. Do not confuse understanding with larger vocabulary. Sacred writings are beneficial in stimulating desire for inward realization if one stanza at a time is slowly assimilated. Otherwise continual intellectual study may result in vanity, false satisfaction and undigested knowledge."

A yogada student has to remember this advice even while reading Gurudeva's books and other allied literature. Even the Autobiography of a Yogi has to be read word by word and contemplated to understand the teachings cotained their in. I have not been able to get past this book till now, and keep reading it again and again to make the advise a part of my being.

In the modern age, philosophy is a subject taught in the universities. Any person obtaining a doctoral is called a philosopher. Apart from this many people take on philosophical subjects as an interesting pass time? In comparison of the elevated thoughts expressed by them their personal life remains totally different from what they preach. Mere bookish knowledge and a string of degrees acquired by cramming are useless. Education should refine the man and elevate his souls to that level where finds his only quest in God and God alone.

The great sage Dabru Ballav has said-"If one busies himself with outer display of scriptural wealth what time is left for silent inward diving after the priceless pearls?"

Guruji says that Swami Yukteshwar considered book knowledge not a necessary step for spiritual realization.

In support of his belief Sri Yukteshwarji has said, *"The Rishi wrote in one sentence the profoundities that commenting scholar busy themselves over for generations. Endless literary controversy is for sluggard minds. What more quickly liberating thoughts than God is–Nay God? But man does not easily return to simplicity. It is seldom "God: for an intellectual, but rather learned pompositities."*

The same thought as were expressed by the Sadhu at Kalighat temple, pointing out that God is simple and all debates and sermons about him are complicated i.e. accept all conceptions of God as God is head and pray sincerely. Do not enter or listen to discussions of the merits and demerits of a system of approach to God as each guru draw his own path for his disciples and the job of the disciple is to follow the true master. Both Sri Lahiri Mahashaya and Swami Yukteshwar have said, *"To wear the ochre robe when one lacks God-realization is misleading to society. Forget the outward symbols of renunciation, which may injure you by inducing false pride. Nothing matters except your steady daily spiritual advancement: for that use KRIYA YOGA."*

Here the emphasis is on inward renunciation while carrying in the duties in the external world. Constant practice of KRIYA with concentration on God hepls us to give up our small temptations to begin with and in due course to time liberation from deeper attachment to the physical body.

Again in the same context Guruji says, *"My guru personally attended to the details connected with the management of his property. Unscrupulous persons on various occasions* *attempted to secure possession of master's ancestor land. With determination and even instigating lawsuits, Sir Yukteshwar out-witted every opponent. He underwent these painful experiences from a desire never to be a begging Guru; or a burden on his disciples."*

This statement has been included to illustrate that detachment from worldly possessions does not mean allowing other people to snatch away what rightly belongs to us. The rights of social codes must be defended to keep proper discipline in the society even by recourse to legal measures. Even a yogi or a family man needs to remain financially independent to avoid becoming a burden to others. Our gurus have amply demonstrated the need for self-generated income to carry on decent life in the society. Hard honest work and managing within the limited income and contentment in the divine boon are the paths shown by them to us. This chapter closes with Guruji's observation *"I often reflected that my majestic Master could easily have been an emperor or world shaking Warrior had his mind been centered on fame or worldly achievements. He has chosen instead to storm those inner citadels of wrath and egoism whose fall is the height of a man."*

Criticism about ourselves should be heard calmly and introspection has to be done to judge whether there is even an iota of truth in the statement made about us.

If it is found that there is some justification for the complaint, we should correct the mistake.

In chapter 13 we are taken to Ranbajpur to see the sleepless saint Sri Ramgopal Majumdar. This chapter is designed to explain the need for patience to stay with the chosen Guru and abide by time

to get his grace.
In this chapter we are also told the importance of sacred shrines of God, and how ignoring God brings its own penalty by way of extra effort for a simple job.

The spiritual shrines of India where the Rishis have installed the divine power, and the shrines of saints of the past, are our real nuclear plants from where we can gather spiritual power needed to unlock the secrets of creation. We can perceive him outside also particularly in these scared shrines. It is because of that the ancients advised older people to renounce the world and go for pilgrimages.

Sri Ramgopal Majumdar tells Guruji *"what one does not trouble to find within, will not be discovered by transporting the body hither and yon. As soon as the devotee is willing to go even to the ends of the earth for spiritual enlightenment, his Guru appears nearby."*

Our body is the temple as stated in the shloka:

"Atma twam, Girija mati, Parijanaha prana, Sariram griham, pooja tey vishayopa bhoga rasana, Nidra samdhi stithi, Sanchara paday pradakshina vidhi, Stotrani sarva girow, Yad yad karma karoti tad akhilam Shambho tavaaradhanam."

Meaning—(0)'God you are my soul, your dynamic power is my brain, the pranic forces which sustain my body are my friends the body itself is your abode, all my sense enjoyments are offerings to you, my sleep is the samadhi, O lord let all my activities in this earth, be of such nature that itself becomes worship to you.

This is to say our life, speech action, thought, food, enjoyments, should be such that they can become offering to God. Our body should always be clean externally and internally so that God can reside there. Such a person will find self-realization is automatic.

Sri Majumdar puts another question and that is *"Are you able to have a little room where you can close the door and be alone? That is your cave."*

Thus shows us the necessity to have a small place exclusive for our meditation. For many people it may not be easy to have a separate room but effort has to be made to adjust our times in such a way that within a household the chosen places will be vacant at the required time of meditation.

Guruji later asks Sri Majumdar to grant him a samadhi to which Sri Majumdar says *"Dear one I will be glad to convey the divine contacts but it is not my place to do so. Your master will bestow that experience on you shortly. Your body is not tuned just yet. As a small lamp bulb would be shattered by excessive electrical voltage, so your nerves are unready for the cosmic current if I give you the infinite ecstasy right now, you would burn as if every cell were on fire."*

Guruji has included this piece of conversation to teach the yogada students that, getting the body ready, by adopting the yogada prescribed diet, practice of kriya meticulously, and keeping the mind free of impure thoughts and trying to be in saintly company are essential foundations to strengthen body, mind and soul to receive God when he chooses to bestow his grace on us. After this Sri Majumdar reveals the secret of this sleeplessness. According to Pathanjali 'Nidra' or sleep is also a vrutti (nature of Maya or ignorance) and has to be done away with to attain self-realization.

In samadhi a person is free of all vruttis where as in sleep a person is not aware of his body, and in dream he experiences joy and sorrow. Mental experiences are the result of trigunas (three fold qualities), such as Satva (pure good qualities), Rajas (mixed qualities) and Tamas (bad qualities). In samadhi a person is free of all qualities and another important lesson we learn in this chapter and that is it takes intense concentration and one pointed Meditation for several years before the divine grace is obtained. A yogada student has to keep on plodding along the yoga path with firm faith in God and guru till he comes under the divine grace. An important point to remember is the pursuit may extend to life beyond this life but pursuit should never be given up. In the next chapter we see guruji returning to Sri Yukteshwar's ashram in repentant mood with expression of shame and apologizing to his guru for his unauthorized absence and asking if his guru was angry with him. To this Sri Yukteshwar replies- "*No of course not. Wrath springs only from thwarted desires. I do not expect any thing from others, so their actions cannot be in opposition to the wishes of mine. I would not use you for my own ends; I am happy in our own true happiness.*"

The happiness and easy way to attain equanimity is not to expect any thing from any one even it is own kith and kin. When we do not expect anything we do not have cause for disappointemt.

After a few days of this Sri Yukteshwar bestows cosmic experience on our Guru and the same is described in detail for the benefit of mankind. After the experience when our Guru started to prostrate, Swami Yukteshwar says,- "*You must not get over drunk with ecstasy. Much work yet remains for you in this world. Come let us sweep the balcony floor, then we shall walk by the Ganges.*" What has been indicated here is, even after attaining cosmic consciousness the kriya yogi should not abstain or neglect even the ordinary daily chores like sweeping the balcony floor or going for an evening walk etc. the outer normal world should remain ignorant of the Inner Light perceived by the yogi. To explain this Yukteshwarji says–*"It is the spirit of God that actively sustains every form and force in the universe; yet he is transcendental and aloof in the blissful uncreated void beyond the worlds of vibratory phenomenon. Those who attain self-realization of earth live in a similar two-fold existence. Conscientiously performing their work in the world, they are yet immersed in an inward beatitude."*

"We know that the material world is sustained by vibrating atoms. This has been established in the scientific laboratories. The very vibration is the creation of God who also does the work of sustaining it."

The spirit of God is beyond the vibratory creation. Similarly an attained yogi though normally resides in this vibratory world should continue to perform his normal duties, while remaining outside of it, untouched by the activities going on in it and remain immersed in divine bliss all the time. Guruji says–*"A master bestows the divine experience of cosmic consciousness when his disciples by meditation have strengthened his mind to a degree where the vast vistas would not overwhelm him. Mere intellectual willingness or open mindedness is not enough. Only adequate enlargement of consciousness by yoga practice and devotional Bhakti can prepare one to absorb the liberating shock of omnipresence."*

"The divine experience comes with a material inevitability to the sincere devotee. His intense craving begins to pull at God with irresistible force. The Lord as cosmic vision is drawn by that magnetic ardour into the seekers range consciousness."

Here once again Guruji has explained the necessity to expand our consciousness by practice of kriya yoga and seeking God with sincere and intense devotion in order to prepare the body for withstanding the shock of cosmic vision. He also assures us that all of us will get divine experience, if we sincerely seek God above all other things of this Earth. Guruji has explained here why God is called " Rasa" (the most relishable). It is to say God is like the taste of nectar, which can be experienced inside oneself but cannot be seen easily. One more point about divine grace is quoted by Swami Yukteshwar–"one may gain the power to control the whole universe yet find the Lord elusive still. Spiritual advancement is not to be measured by one's display of outward powers. But solely by the depth of his bliss in meditation."

This is to say our nearness to God is directly proportional to our bliss in meditation.Greater the desire for meditation nearer is the God to us because God is ever new joy (Sal, Chit, Ananda). Once God is found it is the end of all wordly attractions.

As concluding remark Sri Yukteshwarji says–"Human life is best with sorrow until we know how to tune in with the divine will whose right course is often buffing to the egoistic intelligence."

Man experiences sorrow because his life does not go along his own determined path. Unless it is the path of God life takes a different turn from that which is planned by the human being. Only when he understands the path as laid out by God

take on any subject is whether it is true. The law of gravitation worked as efficiently before Newton as after him. The cosmos would be fairly chaotic if its Law's would not operate without the sanction of human belief. Astrology is too vast, Mathematically and philosophically, to be rightly grasped except by men of profound understanding. If ignoramuses misread the heavens and seen there a scroll instead of a script that is to be expected in this imperfect world." The scientific attitude on a subject means:-

(a) Learning a subject from it's A, B, C and D.
(b) Attaining a good level of proficiency to understand the various rules, permutations and combinations.
(c) Deeper study and research on the material already made available by the older scholars.
(d) Practical application and testing of one's own knowledge and assessing the success rate.
(e) Analyzing the cause for failures and taking corrective measures.
(f) Constant study and practice to achieve perfection. People who scientifically study a subject seldom have time for unfruitful discussions.

Swami Sri Yukteshwar has explained the purpose and working of Astrology in such a beautiful and simple way, that it cannot be more simplified.

Pointing out the need of Astrological counselling swami says, "effects of all human ills arise from some transgression of universal law. The scriptures point out that man must satisfy the laws of natrure, while not discrediting the divine omnipotence. He should say: Lord I trust in thee, and know thou can help me. But I too will do my best to undo any wrong I have done, by number of means– by prayer, by will power, by Yoga meditation, by consultation

with saints by the use of Astrological bangles–the adverse past wrongs can be minimized or nullified".
In this chapter Swami Yukteshwar Guru's interpretation of the Adam and Eve episode of the Bible is most awe-inspiring. Swami Sri Pranavanand interpreted the entire Geeta in the same manner in his Pranava Geeta.

In the next chapter we see three miraculous feats performed by Sri Yukteshwarji. The first incident is the curing of the horse doctor and his death. The second is the curing of Sasi and the third is the introduction of the BA course final year at the Serampore College to suit the timetable of our gurudeva. Swami Yukteshwarji performed these feats without any special effort shows the power of the yogi over the mundane world. Immediately next to this is the chapter 18 illustrating the life of the Moslem wonder worker, who was ruined because of his misuse of yogic power bestowed on him by his Guru.

In chapter 19 we see once again Sri Yukteshwar Giri assuming two bodies. We have the mention of saints assuming two bodies in four places in our book. First it is Lahiri Mahashaya's appearance before Guruji's father then Swami Pranavananda at Benares and the third Swami Yukteshwar at Serampore ashram before Guruji and then Sri Lahiri Mahashaya at Dasaswamedha Ghat in Varanasi.

In the next chapter Our Guruji is prevented form going to Kashmir as his life was in danger. In the 21st chapter we visit Kashmir of the old pre-partition period. Now this Kashmir is available only in the bookish descriptions. Human greed has taken its toll both on the nature and the inhabitants.

Swami Sri Yukteshwar gives the hint that he may become seriously ill. Here a doubt may arise in the mind of the readers as to how a person who can cure others at will can be become sick? Sensing the anticipated questions, Guruji has given a profound explanation in the rest of the chapter. Two points of chapter 22 are a must to be remembered category. The first is Guruji has the vision of Divine Mother of Dakshineshwar. She grants him the desired boon. The second is the total conversion of an atheist to total devout who attained emancipation. This incident takes us back to Chapter 12 page 116 where Swami Yukteshwar says– "*Forget the past, the vanished lives of all men are dark with many shames. Human conduct is ever unreliable until a man is anchored in the divine. Every thing in future will improve if you are making the spiritual effort now.*"

In chapter 23 Guruji tells us how he got his BA degree. Once again God and Guru come to his aid in arranging coaching and getting the pass marks reduced. One million dollar question is asked by Swami Sri Yukteshwar and that is "*Mukunda, has the Lord failed you at an examination or elsewhere?*"

The obvious answer is "No sir," because God never fails anyone who totally surrenders to him, and this is the experience of all true devotees. In the footnote of this chapter we are told about "Vibhuti" the Yogic power attained by individual as a result of universal sympathy which springs from being devoid of the EGO principle also known as the **AHAMKARA.**

An explanation to Guruji's observation on page 60 (God plants his saints some times in unexpected soil, lest we think we may reduce him to a rule) is found here.

"*Each saint reflects God in his own way: the expressions of individual is basic in a world where not two grains of sand* *are exactly alike. Invariable rules may not be formulated about God illuminated saints. Some perform miracles others do not, some are inactive while others like (king Janaka of ancient India and St. Theresa of Avila) are concerned with large affairs, some teach, travel and accept disciples while others pass their lives as silently and unobtrusively as shadow. No worldly critic can read the secret scroll of karma that unrolls for each saint a different script."*

Next we see Guruji becoming a monk of the Swami order. Swami Yukteshwar initiates our guru after this observation- *"I am happy that you have persisted in your desire to be a monk. Lahiri Mahashaya often said if you do not invite God to be your summer guest he won't come in the winter of your life."*

God has to be loved and worshipped right from young age (summer). The responsibility of parents is very great in this respect. They have to show to their children right from young age how to trust, love and worship God by doing it themselves and making the children follow them. When the children grow up they will continue the habit of worshipping God who comes to their assistance in their old age (winter).

Guruji says *"To allot the Lord a secondary place in life was, to me inconceivable. He is the sole owner of the cosmos, silently showering man with gifts from life to life. "There is but one gift man may offer in return to his love, which he is empowered to withhold or bestow."*

In these few lines Guruji has given us his guidelines for us to follow. Every day of life has to be spent in loving and thanking God for his infinite mercy even for just being alive each morning thereby giving us one more day to worship him!

Guruji adds- "*In taking infinite pains to shroud with mystery his presence in the atoms of creation the creator could have had but one motive - one sensitive desire that man seeks him only through free will. With what velvet glove of every humility has he not covered the iron hand of omnipotence.*"

Strangely this paragraph has become more relevant when man is trying to clone himself. Bio-scientists have now started claiming that they have unravelled the secret of creation in the laboratory. One sheep has been successfully cloned. What man has forgotten is it is God who has done the first cloning. Individual specimens of each species are exactly alike in all characteristics. Contrary to this man–produced clone may be same in constitution but may vary in character. So far the scientists have not claimed that it is not so. Secondly, man is incapable of producing an original life form.

God's secret of creation can never be unlocked in any physical laboratory. It is only in the mental laboratories through perfection in yoga can man produce his identical twin that can be present in two or more places simultaneously!

Guruji describes the ecstasy he felt on being initiated into the ancient Swami order. He then tells us the history of the Swami order, the difference between a Swami and a Yogi. How yoga can be practiced by any person of any country. The 8 steps of Pathanjali yoga sutra are described in detail for the benefit of yogada students. What we have to remember is that a student of yoga has to clear each step fully to go on to the next step. In this order Dhyana or meditation is the seventh step.

How can any one go to the seventh step without clearing the first six steps? In the concluding part of this chapter Guruji says- "*yoga* *practice would be ineffective without the concepts on which yoga is based. It combines the bodily and the spiritual with each other in an extraordinarily complete way."* The footnote on page 228 is an important sermon of our Guruji to the sutdents of yogada sat sangha. Many students forget this important piece of advice given directly by the guru himself and try to gauge their own progress without complying with the basic requisites of Yama and Niyama!

In the next chapter we see Guruji being able to foresee the passing away of his beloved elder brother Ananta. He also felt it deeply because there was no question of making any effort to save his brother as him time in that mortal form had run out. After this we see him helping his youngest sister Nalini to gain weight by his yogic power and saving her life with the help of Swami Sri Yukteshwar.

Once again in this chapter Sri Yukteshwar demonstrates his yogic power by accurately describing Nalini and her ailment though he had never seen her, at our Guruji's wonderment he explains "*Each man is a part of creator, or cosmic man: he has a heavenly body as well as one of earth. The human eye sees the physical form, but the inner eye penetrates more profoundly, even to the universal pattern of which each man is an integral and individual part."* Only a fully attained yogi can understand this statement.

Chapter 26. The science of Kriya Yoga is the most vital chapter in the entire book. If a yogada student can learn this chapter by heart and keep contemplating on the essence of it then slowly a stage will come when he will stop thinking and get immersed in doing Kriya at all the time at his disposal.

"May thy love shine forever on the sanctuary of my devotion and may I be able to awaken thy love in all heart."

Today this prayer is an integral part of the prayers invoked by Yogada students all over the world. Our Guruji in response to the question from his guru- *"Mukunda do you want the whole divine channa for yourself alone ?"* invoked this prayer.

How simply Swami Sri Yukteshwar pointed out the duty of a yogadan! The instruction is that every yogadan is vested with the responsibility of spreading divine love in this sorrow filled world. Educate, illuminate, and embrace is the divine message given here.

The Ranchi school founded by our gurudeva is continuing its mission and a separate wing for girls is also running.

Swami Pranabananda visits Ranchi Shcool and blesses the students and their guru. He also informs our guru deva about his impending depature.

Here we get from Guruji one more pearl of wisdom and that is- *"The burden of years has no effect on a great yogi's full possessions of supreme spiritual powers. He is able to renew his body at will: yet some times he does not care to retard the ageing process but allows his karma to expend itself. On the physical plane, using his present body as a time saving device to preclude the necessity of working out any remaining fragments of Karma in a new incarnation."*

The great saint Late Sri Chandra Sekharendra Saraswati of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetha was an example of this observation by our gurudeva.

In the next chapter we see Kashi, his death, and rebirth and he being discovered in his new incarnation by our gurudeva. The most interesting part of this chapter is the footnotes.

The equilibrium of laws of Karma has been explained beautifully in the following word *"The equilibrium laws of Karma as expounded in the Hindu scriptures, is that of action and reaction, cause and effect, sowing and reaping. In the course of natural righteousness (Rita) each man by his thoughts and actions, becomes the moulder of his destiny. Whatever universal energies he himself wisely or unwisely, has set in motion must return to him as their starting point, like a circle inexorably completing itself. The world looks like mathematical equation, which turn it how you will, balances itself. Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue is rewarded and every wrong redressed in silence and certainty. An understanding of law of Karma as the law of justice underlying life's inequalities serves to free the human mind from resentment against god and man."*

Chapter 29 deals with guru's visit to Shantiniketan and his discussions of education with the poet Sri Rabindranath Tagore. Today the Vishwa Bharati University is far from the ideal educational institute envisaged by Sri Tagore. However the Yogada Satsangha Vidyalayas continue on the guidelines of Guruji because of the plan of all round development of body, mind and the soul of an individual through yoga practices. In this context what Sri. Rabindra nath Tagore envisaged for Independent India and what actually happened after independence are beautifully encrypted in two separate verses as under.
By Rabindra Nath Tagore (as envisaged)
Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high; where knowledge is free, where the world has not been broken up into

fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection,

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost.

It's way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever widening thought and action in that heaven of freedom my father, let my country awake.

By Gunjan Bindal Class 12 Conrad inter college, Agra India (as it is after independence)

Where all Indians enjoy the right to life and security.

Where our children are not absorbed in bangle

And carpet industries;

Where the girl child is given due care and concern.

Where women are given due respect;

Where bonded labor is banned and not blessed;

Where up to the age of 14 the education is free and compulsory;
Where a rickshaw-puller can claim his rights in the court. Into that heaven of freedom and right Father let my country awake!

In the next chapter, which is named as the law of miracles; Guruji deals with the so-called miracles and how they are manifested. Guruji has analyzed the whole thing in the background of atomic physics and self-realization. This probably was the first such analysis of this kind to be done by anyone. Subsequently to gurus writing many other persons have followed suit. In fact there have been many that have blindly copied him.

After making a deep analysis Guruji sums up the entire thing in the footnote of this chapter thus,
"A miracle is commonly considered to be an effect or event without law. But all events in our precisely adjusted universe are lawfully wrought and lawfully explicable. The so called miraculous powers of a great master are a natural accompaniment to his exact understanding of the subtle laws that operate in the inner cosmos of consciousness.
Nothing may truly said to be a miracle except in the profound sense that every thing is miracle. That each of us is encased in an intricately organized body and is set upon on an early whirling through space among the stars—is any thing more common place? Or more miraculous?"

A man travelling in a plane or a train while walking through it seldom remembers that his walk is the first motion, the movement of plane/train is the second motion, the Earth in which he resides, rotating on its axis is the third motion, the Earth orbiting around the sun is the fourth motion, the Sun with its entire solar system moving in space is the fifth motion and other motions which man has not discovered as yet. Man in his physical form feels the first two motions only. Can he say that the other motions are absent because he is not able to experience them with his limited sense perceptions? Even if we contemplate on this factor alone we can understand the law of miracles.

Guruji has explained the chain reaction of atomic fission in a very simple terms–*"The death of matter has given birth to an atomic age"* some one has said that Atom bomb is an invention to end all inventions which may come true if man does not realize that he is nothing but a spec in the cosmos and he has to strive to realize his true self. So our affirmation should be-*"I am engulfed in the quick sand of maya which is trying to suck me in, O Lord redeem me and take me out of this mire. I will contemplate on thee for ever."*

In the next chapter we meet Kashimoni Devi, the divine concert of Shri Lahiri Mahashaya. We receive an important tip from the divine mother when she says-"My guru asked me to receive initiation into Kriya yoga. Of course I replied. I am sorry not to have that blessing earlier in my life."

"And the time was not ripe" Lahiri Mahashaya smiled consolingly.
Much of your Karma I have silently helped you to work out. Now you are willing and ready.

We should realize from this dialogue that we are very lucky to have received Kriya yoga instructions and initiation from sat guru because we have worked out great deal of our Past Karmas.

We also come to know how Sri Lahiri Mahashaya was a bodiless pure spirit, despite living in a physical body. We also see how kind he was towards his disciples by the incident in the life of Abhoya.
Then we go to see his contemporary sage Trailinga Swami who was above all physical limitations. Guruji says-*"Great saints who have awakened from the cosmic magic dream and have realized this world as an idea in the divine mind, can do as*

they wish with the body, knowing it to be a manipulatable form of condensed or frozen energy; illuminated masters have passed victoriously from theory to practice in the field of matter control how it makes us wish that the modern bio-technologists spend more of their time in yoga practice rather than in the biological laboratories."

In this chapter we also see divine justice being meted out in the form of quick retribution to the wrong doers.

Next we see chapter 32 in which Sri Yukteshwar explains- "*The Son of God is the Christ or divine consciousness in man. No mortal can glorify God. The only honour man can pay his creator is to seek him.*"

"*Man cannot glorify an abstraction that he does not know. The Glory or the Nimbus around the head of the saints is a symbolic witness of their capacity to render divine homage.*" That is to say a person who has attained divine consciousness is also capable of performing such purely divine acts such as resurrecting people from dead.

In this chapter once again we see the forecast of a future happening. Sri Lahiri Mahashaya had said- "*about fifty years after my passing an account of my life will be written because of a deep interest in yoga that will arise in the west. The message of yoga will encircle the globe. It will aid in establishing the brotherhood of man, a unity based on humanity's direct perception of one father.*" Sri Yukteshwar adds- "*My son Yogananda you must do your part in spreading that message and in writing about that sacred life.*"
If we presume that Sri Lahiri Mahashaya or Swami Yukteshwar Giri were talking about spread of kriya yoga only, then I feel we

are mistaken. These sages who could see all the future would have surely seen the various forms of yoga, such as Bhakti yoga, Gyana yoga, Dhyana yoga, Sahaja yoga and other yogas and yogis from India who have virtually encircled the world today, with the teaching of yoga techniques which have all their origin in this sacred land known as the Bharata Varsha.

Appropriately in this chapter Guruji explains the Ancient heritage of India and its feat of survival while the other ancient civilizations have disappeared. Guruji says *"The Biblical story of Abraham's plea to the Lord that the city of Sodorn be spared if ten righteous men were found there in, and the divine reply-"I will not destroy it for tens's sake" gains new meaning in the light of India's escape from oblivion. Gone are the empires of the mighty nations, skilled in the art of war that once were India's contemporaries: Ancient Egypt, Babylonia Greece and Rome. The Lord's answer clearly shows that a land lives not in its material achievements, but in its masterpieces of men. Let the divine words be heard again in this 20th century. Twice, dyed in blood are half over. No nation that can produce ten men that are great in the eyes of the Unbribable judge shall know extinction."*

I am happy to record that even during the past 50 years India has produced dozen of saintly men and women who are ardently spreading the glory of God all over the world and are producing disciples to carry on the work in future.

After this we are told about the parentage and birth of Sri Lahiri Mahashaya. In the next chapter Guruji tells us about avataras. We are very lucky to get this explanation from our Guru because we do not have the time and opportunity to listen to the exposition of Upanishads by learned Vedic scholars. In this chapter we are also given a detailed picture of the various states of existence of the yogis and Maha Yogis in order to make us realize the infinite possibilities open before us.

In the next chapter Lahiri Mahashaya meets Mahavtar Babaji. Several important yogic feats are brought to the notice of the Yogada student in a very casual manner. The first one is the transfer order of Lahiri Mahashaya at the instance of the will of Babaji. The second one is the awakening of the dormant memory of the previous birth. The third one is the creation of golden palace in the Himalayas, to redeem Sri Lahiri Mahashaya of his past desire for seeing a golden palace.

Here we are subtly reminded that even a childish desire like seeing a palace becomes a karmic burden even for the great yogis, let alone people like us who have thousands of unfulfilled desires lurking inside our heart. That is to say unless we search inside ourselves and get rid of all our unwanted desire we will remain very far away from self-realization.

The fourth wonder is Babaji's ability to converse in any language. The fifth is the creation of the Akshaya patra about which we have read in Mahabharat but were not able to believe in the existence of such a vessel. The sixth wonder is Lahiri Mahashayas unbroken Nirvikalpa samadhi for seven days during which his absence from the office had gone unnoticed. The eighth one is cancellation of the transfer order of Lahiri Mahashaya. The ninth wonder is materialization of Babaji on the request of Lahiri Mahashaya for establishing truth of his word to his friends. The final parting blessing by Sri Babaji is for all of us to understand and try to attain that perfection expected from each of us:-

"No necessity compels you to leave the world, for inwardly you have surrendered its every karmic tie. Not of this world you must be in it.Many years still remain during which you

should conscientiously fulfill your family, business, civic and spiritual duties. A sweet new breath of divine hope will penetrate the arid hearts of worldly men. From your balanced life they will understand that liberation is dependent on the inner, rather than, outer renunciation." Babaji further says- *"He who vows to sacrifice all in the quest of divine is fit to unravel the final mysteries of life thruogh the science of Meditation."* We have to learn this sentence by heart and try to prepare our mind for sacrificing anything for the sake of divine realization, untill we actually do it we cannot have the glimpse of the divine.

How many householder students of kriya remember that- *"Kriya Yoga is a way of life and requires acceptance by the initiate of certain spiritual discipline and injunctions?"*
After appearing at the request of Sri Lahiri Mahashaya Babaji gives an advice to his disciple- *"Truth is for earnest seekers, not for those of idle curiosity. It is easy to believe when one sees; then there is nothing there to deny. Super sensual truth is deserved and discovered by those who overcome their natural materialistic scepticism."* God is truth. God is super sensual. So materialistic people who are always sceptic about the things, which they cannot see or feel with their external sense organs, cannot discover God.

The footnote is also an interesting caution notice to the devotee, advising him not be overzealous in propagating the wondrous experiences of God's realization. The chapter ends with a lesson in humility - telling us not to criticize any one because every body is an abode of God.

The Christ like life of Lahiri Mahashaya

Our Guruji had come to India in the year 1935 and remembered

the command of his guru Swami Sri Yukteshwar to write about the life and teachings of Sri Lahiri Mahashaya. This chapter contains the essence of all the material collected on the life of the great guru from various sources.

Most important information is that Lahiri Mahashaya was not selective or a partial guru. He accepted any human being as his disciple so long as that person was a real seeker of truth. His advice to his disciples and the yogadans at all times is– "*remember that you belong to no one and no one belongs to you - reflects that some day you will have to leave every thing in this world so make the acquaintance of God now. Prepare yourself for the coming astral journey of death by riding daily in a balloon of divine perception. Through delusion you are perceiving yourself as a bundle of flesh and bones, which at the best is a nest of troubles. Meditate unceasingly, that you quickly behold your self as the infinite essence free from every form of misery. Cease being the prisoner of the body; using the secret key of Kriya learn to escape into spirit.*"

This is a very deep advice. Each individual soul is a part of Brahman and Brahman is the truth in entirety. Physical bodies appear and disappear with time and they are related to each other only in the sense that one is born of the other, or acted as an agent in creation according to God's will. Man by his own efforts can create nothing. Man wallows in bondage of relationships due to the Maya of delusion. People's direct obligations are to his parents, guru and God. Of these mother is first because she gives birth to the child, next the father because he participates in the creation and then the guru because he removed the ignorance called maya, then God because he is the creator of everything in the universe.
We are not given any notice before leaving the earth. In this respect King Parikshit was very lucky to have got 7 days notice in which

time he attained liberation from Maya. So we are advised to treat everyday as a departing day and pray to God sincerely so that we can safely leave anytime. It is also the reason why the scriptures of all religions have advocated prayers several times in a day. The great guru taught his discipleees to avoid theoretical discussion of scriptures. "He only is wise who devotes himself to realizing, not reading only the ancient revelations." He said – *"solve all your problems through meditation. Exchange unprofitable religious speculation for actual God communion. Clear your mind of dogmatic theological debris, let in the fresh healing water of direct perception. Attune yourself to the active inner guidance; the divine voice has the answer to every dilemma of life. Though man's ingenuity for getting himself into trouble appears to be endless, the infinite succor is no less resourceful."*

The theoretical discussion referred to here is of various kinds. The first of it is the debate–which is the true religion? Each religion has many sects; then again a debate comes to finding out which is the right sect.

Then there is another kind of debate about the correct interpretation of the sciptures. The great guru advises us never to listen or take part and waste our precious time on this earth, instead practice kriya in that time which truly brings liberation from bondage of Maya. A person who is able to hear his inner voice in meditation has solution to every problem of life. For this a concentrated performance of each techique of kriya takes a person faster towards realization. This is illustrated in the story of the Benares postman Brinda Bhagat. In this chapter the quotation from late Sri Anand Mohan Lahiri's writing needs a little explanation. He writes- *"The Bhagvat Gita and the other parts of Mahabharata epic possess several knot points (vyasa kutas). Keep the knot* *points unquestioned, and we find nothing but mythical stories of a peculiar and easily misunderstood type. Leave the knot–points unexplained, and we have lost a science that the East has preserved with super human patience after a quest of thousands of years of experiment."*

One Vyasa Kuta

Samudra manthan or the churning of the ocean of milk.

This story related in the purana appears to be a piece of imaginary fiction. But this is a vyasa kuta. The whole thing can be explained like this—Good and evil are in equal proportion in the material Universe. "Deva" symbolizes the good and the evil as "the Asura" the active consciousness called as the "Mana" is the throbbing sea of milk. Viveka or the discrimination is the Mandar hill. Greed is the serpent called Vasuki. Ego is the poison called Hala-hala. Siva is the Yogi, who has consumed the poison of Ego/Ahamkara. Immortality is the Amrita or the Nectar. God himself is the giver and the delusion called Mohini/Maya. Those who consume the Amrita become Immortal and attain Nityananda/eternal bliss, and those who fall prey to the Wiles of Mayas get entangled in the eternal cycles of birth and death.

Another Vyasa kuta

The Kaliya mardan of the dance of Krishna on the many hooded serpent

Mana or the active conciouseness is the River Yamuna. There lives in it a six hooded serpent called Kaliya/Ahankara with hoods named as Kama (lust), Krodha (anger), Lobha (covetousness), Moha (attachment), Mada (pride/ahankara) and Matsarya (jealousy). This serpent spoils the crystal clear waters of the river called mana constantly keeping it in a state of turbulence. When a person understands the cause and sincerely prays to Lord Krishna (who is the godhead, by constantly doing Govinda name samkirtan) he jumps into the river and crushes the hoods of the serpent by dancing on them. It is then the Intelligence called Buddhi, which is the consort of ego prays for release. The Lord smiles and enlightens the mind and drives away the Ego.

The greatest of all vyasa kutas is the birth & leelas of Lord as Sri Krishna. The Lord manifested himself in full form before the parents and giving them his blessings and advice, turned into his magic form of the child Krishna. From then on all the incidents were according to the divine will of the Lord. His devotees could see him as God walking the Earth and worshipped him as such and were blessed in turn with fulfillment of their desires. The others who could see only his Magic form and thought him to be a human being indulged in various vicious gossips about him and lost the grace. This is true even to this day.

Similarly the birth and work of Sri Veda Vyasa is itself a Vyasa kuta. It is explained that this word para means kutasta chaitanya, shara and ashara are both the names of Sun god. The word Para shara thus stands for the transforming rays of the sun, who is Satyavati the accused daughter of the fishermen and was stinking?

Vasu means fire and accused by vasu means burnt by fire, the rubbish heap lying outside the village and spreading stinking smell for long distances. Once this rubbish was the beautiful fragrant form of vegetation, flowers and fruits, now turned into the bad smelling rubbish and it was converted to a sweet smelling manure. From that manure with the help of sun came out many beautiful and fragrant smelling flowers and fruits, which are known as vyasa. Time is the Ganges alluded in the story and body is the island in which birth of a divine spark as soul takes place.

little bit we can easily see the divine hand at work.

Otherwise how can we understand a young Sadhu embarking for a very distant land with a totally alien culture where he had hardly any friends; settling there, teaching yoga, and spreading it all over the world from the centers he established there?

In the next chapter we meet Luther Burbank the American saint who understood nature in her purest form. Guruji says- "*After many thoughtful questions to me about various aspects of yoga, Luther remarked slowly, "The East indeed possesses immense hoard of knowledge that the West has scarcely begun to explore.*"

I wish every Indian read this statement of Luther Burbank and starts thinking and practicing Kriya Yoga.

In the beginning of chapter 39 we see the mental telepathy flashing a message from Serampore to California. In those days the satellites were not here, nor was the e-mail or hotmail. It was to demonstrate to us that science has not yet reached the stage of communication. where except self–no other aid is required to transmit a message. Here once again we read the permanent prayer we can all remember-"Lord he who remembers thee as the sole giver will never lack the sweetness of friendship among mortals."

Next we go to see Therese Neumann, the German Saint who lived by God's light. Guruji tells her- "*your sacred life is a daily demonstration of truth uttered by Christ, man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*" To this she replies– "*It is indeed so. One of the reasons I am here on Earth today is to prove that man can live by God's invisible light and not by food only.*"

When we read this we feel the years roll back and once again we are in the presence of Swami Dayanandji who advised our Guruji– "*Mukunda never believe that you live by the power of food and not by the power of God!*". If we can believe this advice truly a lot of miseries from our lives will disappear. The footnote here provides us with full information about how the cosmic energy is absorbed into the body making it unnecessary to depend on food for sustenance. In the chapter for the second time Guruji very casually mentions an extraordinary yogic feat performed by him so casually that we tend to over look the significance and importance of it. Guruji says "*My second test was connected with the fact that just before I went upstairs to her room, I put myself into a yogic trance in order to attain telepathic and television rapport with her.*" Here our Guruji has done two extraordinary things. The first is he transverses time along with these, and could see the incident which tookplace two milleniums back in his own Kutashta Chaitanya. He has thus demonstrated to us the Einstein's theory that time and space are relative terms. One more important point is Mr. Wright who was companion of Guruji on this tour could also see the same vision because of gurus grace, and when he fainted yet returned back to see the heart rending spectacle, he was praised by the guru for his courage in a divine cause.

In the footnote of the page 367 Guruji once again reminds us of the limited capacity of human brain. He says- "*the reasoning faculties cannot shed light on man's ultimate being. The human mind likes the transitory world that it cognizes, is in perpetual flux and can yield no finalities. Intellectual satisfaction is not the highest goal. The seeker of God is the real lover of Vidya - unchangeable truth, all else is Avidya - relative knowledge.*"

In the next chapter we see Guruji going home to meet his aged father and the happy reunion. After this the historical meeting with his own Guru, then the teachers and the students of Ranchi School. The effort put in for renovation of the school building and making it as a permanent endowment. The establishment of Yogada Satasangha Math and the education curriculum of the Y.S.S Brahmacharya Vidyalaya.

In the 41st chapter named The Idyll in South India, we read out Guruji narrating the glories of India in the past and the great men she produced and their achievements in various fields of art, culture and religion. In the 42nd chapter we see the reason why Swami Yukteshwar Giri summoned our Guruji urgently. Yukteshwarji offers the title of Parama Hansa on Guruji and hands over the responsibility of carrying on the spreading of Kriya yoga over the Earth. He then hints about his departure from this Earth shortly.

Guruji says-"*Master trembled like a frightened child (attachment to bodily residence springing up of its own nature is present in slight degree even in great. saints.*" Pathanjali wrote-"*in some of my guru's discourses on death, he had been wont to add, just as a long caged bird hesitates to leave its accustomed home when the door is opened).*"

Then Guruji takes permission of Swami Yukteshwar to attend the Kumbha mela at Allahabad.

In the footnote we get the detailed information on the four Kumbha melas held in rotation. We accompany our guru to the Kumbha mela and see the wonderful sights of the mela, meet the Karapatri ji. From there we go to Brindavan to meet Swami Keshabananda at the Katyayani peeth ashram. For the information of those interested yogadans this ashram still exists at Brindavan and I was fortunate to be there in 1998.

Guruji answers the questions raised by me in the beginning of this book in this chapter. He writes- *"My object in seeking out Keshabananda was connected with this book. I had never forgotten Sri Yukteshwar's request that I write the life of Lahiri Mahashaya. During my stay in India I was taking every opportunity of contacting direct disciples and relatives of the Yogavatar. Recording their conversation in voluminous notes, I verified facts and dates, and collected photographs, old letters and documents. My Lahiri Mahashaya portfolio began to swell: I realized with dismay ahead of me lay arduous labors in authorship. I prayed that I may be equal to my role as biographer of the colossal guru. I spared no effort to secure and substantiate the facts of his outward life."*

From Keshabananda we come to know of the approval of the Babaji for the Autobiography of a Yogi. Thus it becomes clear that our guru wrote the book on the divine command of his gurus to enlighten the world about them and to aid in the spread of Kriya Yoga throughout the world. The chapter ends with the Maha samadhi of Swami Sri Yukteshwar Giri at Puri.

Resurrection of Sri yukteshwarji

In this chapter we see our guru meeting Sri Yukteshwar in his astral body and explaining the existence of several other astral worlds. This chapter contains the secret of creation and how the soul assumes various bodies and enjoys or suffers as per its Karma. The methods for redemption and attaining permanent joy. Sri Yukteshwar advises guruji to broadcast his message to the world so that the poor human beings can learn the truth of creation and adopt the way for eternal freedom.

After the departure of Sri Yukteshwar, Guruji writes– "*Gone was the sorrow of parting. The pity and grief for his death, long robber of my peace, now fled in stark shame. Bliss poured forth like a fountain through endless, newly opened soul pores. Anciently clogged with disuse, they now widened in purity at the driving flood of ecstasy. My former incarnations appeared before my inward eye in motion picture like sequence. Good and bad karma of the past dissolved in the cosmic light shed around me by Master's divine visit.*" Guruji wanted us to be positively convinced of the Geeta shloka that man is born on this Earth on account of his past Karmas or actions. Hes has to dissolve them totally to get redemption form the bondage of birth and death in this mortal world. With the visit of Sri Yukteshwar, guruji was relieved of all his past karmas and purified. In the next chapter we see Guruji going to Wardha Ashram to meet Mahatma Gandhi. Many important points have been discussed which stand as true as it was on the day when it was written. After this Guruji arrives at a conclusion-

"*It takes a fairly strenuous course of training to attain a mental state of non-violence. It is a disciplined life, like the life of a soldier. The perfect state is reached only when the mind; body and speech are in proper coordination. Every problem would lend itself to solution if we determine to make the law of truth and non-violence as the law of life. The grim march of world's political events point inexorably to the truth that without spritual vision, the people perish. Science if not religion has awakened in humanity a dim sense of insecurity and even insubstantiality of all material things. Where indeed may man go to now, if not to his source and origin, the sprit within him?*"

Consulting history one may reasonably state that man's problems have not been solved by the use of brute force. World War I produced an earth-chilling snowball of dread karma that swelled into World War II. Only the warmth of brotherhood can melt the present colossal snowball of sanguinary karma that may otherwise grow instead of human reason in setting disputes will restore the Earth to jungle. If not brothers in life then brothers in violent death. It was not for such ignominy that God lovingly permitted man to discover the release of Atomic energies! War and crime never pay. The billions of dollars that went up in smoke and nothingness would have been sufficient to have made a new world, one almost free from disease and completely free from poverty. Not an Earth of fear, chaos and famine pestilence the dance macabre, but one broad land of peace prosperity and widening knowledge." The world has not heeded the warning given by Guruji and is heading for another great apocalypse.

In the next two chapters gurudeva meets two woman saints, Ananda Moyee Maa and Giribala. When saints meet each other there is hardly any conversation because both remain immersed in divine bliss. Indian History has recorded many such meetings of the saints and reading of the record of such meetings is in itself very wonderful and enriching experience. Guruji returned to America in the year 1936 and presented a silver cup to yogacharya Dickinson. The presentation of the cup was foretold by Swami Vivekananda 43 years earlier to boy Dickinson. This is a real incident recorded by our Guru so there is no need to verify the authenticity of it. This is also proof of the fact that Yogis are Trikalagnas or persons who can see past, present and future effortlessly. After this we hear from our guru his work in Encinitas Ashram and compilation of cosmic chants.

The forty ninth chapter is the last chapter of the book and this is what I call as the golden chapter. In this chapter we see the great vision of Guruji who fully understood the greatness of India that is Bharat, and has taken great pains to convince the westerners that it is not a land of poverty and illiteracy but a land of abundance and infinite riches of both material and spiritual category. Today the Government of India is trying to rewrite the history on the outlines given by Sri Parama Hansaji, in the footnote of this chapter. For those who have not read the autobiography properly I reproduce the extract of it here-

"*The ideal of well rounded civilization is not a chimerical one. For milleniums India was a land of both spiritual light and wide spread material prosperity. The poverty of the last 200 years is, in India's long history, only a passing karmic phase. A byword in the world, century after century, was the riches of the Indies. The Records of history present India, up to 18th century, as the world's wealthiest nation. Incidentally nothing in Hindu Literature or tradition tends to substantiate the current western historical theory that the early Aryans "invaded" India from some other part of Asia or from Europe. The scholars are understandably unable to fix the starting point of this imaginary journey. The immemorial home of the Hindus has been presented in an unusual and very readable volume. Rigvedic India by Abinas Chandra Das, published in 1921 by Calcutta University*". *In this way Guruji has given a lengthy account of the richness of India as seen by various outsiders. Summing up he says–"Man's forgetfulness of his soul resources (the result of misuse of free will) is the root cause of all other forms of suffering. The ills attributed to an anthropomorphic abstraction called "society" may be laid more realistically at the door of every man. Utopia must spring in private bosom before it can flower in civic virtue, inner reforms leading to outer ones.* ***A MAN WHO HAS***

REFORMED HIMSELF WILL REFORM A THOUSAND". Guruji is pointing out that we tend to blame the society for all our deficiencies. If we can realize the defects in our individual character and take steps to remove them then the whole society will change by itself into a good society. He says further–"*to become the friend of God, man must overcome the devils or the evils of his own karma or actions that ever urge him to spineless acquiescence in the magic delusions of the world.*

Knowledge of the iron law of karma encourages the earnest seeker to find the way of final escape from its bonds. Because the karmic slavery of human being is rooted in the desire of Maya darkened minds; it is with mind control that yogi concerns himself. The various cloaks of Karmic ignorance are laid away and man views himself in his native essence. The mystery of life and death, whose solution is the only purpose of man's journey on Earth, is intimately interwoven with breath. Breathlessness is deathlessness - realizing this truth the ancient rishi's of India seized on the sole clue of breath and developed a precise and rational science of breathlessness.

"HAD INDIA NO OTHER GIFT FOR THE WORLD "KRIYA YOGA" WOULD ALONE SUFFICE AS KINGLY OFFERING". Man's conscious state is the awareness of body and breath. His sub-conscious state, active in sleep so associated with his mental and temporary separation from body and breath. His super conscious state is a freedom from the delusion that "existence" depends on body and breath. God lives without breath; the soul made in his image becomes conscious of itself, of the first time, only during the breathless state. When the breath-link between soul and body is severed by evolutionary arm, the abrupt transition called "death" ensures: the physical cell reverts to their natural powerlessness. For the Kriya Yogi,

however the breath link is severed at will by scientific wisdom, not by the intrusion of karmic necessity. Through actual experience, the yogi is already aware of his essential incorporeity, and does not require the somewhat pointed hint given by death that man is badly advised to place his reliance on physical body.

Life by life each progresses (at his own pace be it so erratic) towards the goal of his own apotheosis. Death, no interruption in this onward swap, simply offers man the more congenial environment of an astral world in which to purify his dross. It is indeed unlikely that God has exhausted his ingenuity in organizing this world, or that in the next world.

Death is not blotting out of existence, a final escape from life; nor is death a door to immortality. He who has fled himself in earthly joys will not recapture it amidst the gossamer charms of an astral world. There he merely accumulates finer perceptions and more sensitive responses to the beautiful and the good, which are one. It is on the anvil of the gross Earth that struggling man but hammer to the imperishable God of spiritual identity. Bearing in his hand the hard-won, golden treasure, the sole acceptable gift to the greedy death, a human being wins final freedom from the rounds of physical reincarnations."

The human being under the grip of Maya tends to forget that his intelligence is not complete and he is only a speck of the universal intelligence called God. He can never solve the mystery of creation. That is why Sri Yukteshwarji said "*How could man's limited reasoning power comprehend the inconceivable motives of the uncreated absolute? The rational faculty in man tethered by the cause and effect principle of the phenomenal world is baffled before the enigma of God, the beginning less the uncaused. Nevertheless, man's reason cannot fathom the-riddle* *of creation, every mystery will ultimately be solved for the devotee by God himself."*

Guruji concludes-*"He who sincerely yearns for wisdom is content to start his search by mastering a few simple ABC's of the divine schemes, not demanding prematurely a precise mathematical graph of life's Einstein Theory."*

Om Shanti Shanti Shantihi

From the Autobiography of a Yogi

Rasamrita

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